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AUTHOR Jaura, Ramesh, Ed.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

The discussion presented in this booklet was organized to foster international understanding by encouraging a genuine dialogue between the industrialized nations of the northern hemisphere and the developing nations in the southern hemisphere. The first section of the booklet presents introductory statements by the chairperson of the North-South Forum and by the head of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Media and Communication Department. The second half of the document presents the discussion of the forum, which focused on communication and media development in the Third World and the demand by the South for a more balanced share of the information flow, as well as related issues of worldwide economic and political crises and technological advancements in telecommunications. The discussion section is divided by speakers, with moderator comments by the FES head. The speakers cited in the report include a professor at the National Institute of Development Administration, Bankok, Thailand; the director of the Africa division of Deutsche Welle; the former Permanent Secretary of the Federal German PTT Ministry; the chairperson of the Board of directors of the Deutsche Presse-Agenture; a representative of URTNA, a regional association of African broadcasting organizations; a representative of the German Federal PTT Ministry; a representative from the Regional Mass Communication Research and Documentation Centre, Ecuador; and the head of Radio 4, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation. (HTH)

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communication manual

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Media Development and Economic Crisis

Proceedings of a Panel Discussion organized by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and Nord-Süd-Forum e.V. on September 19, 1984, Bonn

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Introductory Statements from the Organizers

Ramesh Jaura, Chairman, North-South Forum

We from North-South Forum are grateful to the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung for the help and cooperation extended in organising a joint panel discussion on the media and publishing its proceedings.

The subject of the panel discussion is inextricably linked to a generally interdependent relationship between the highly industrialised countries in the North and developing as well as newly industrialised countries of the Southern hemisphere.

An important reason why the non-governmental independent organisation North-South Forum, which has members from both the South and the North, approached the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung was that FES plays a leading role in the setting-up and promotion of media in the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America – a leading role not only as far as the Federal Republic of Germany is concerned but also as far as the Western part of North is concerned.

The Forum has taken upon itself the task of fostering international understanding by encouraging a genuine North-South dialogue. It was established in Bonn on 25 February 1983 after about seven months of in-depth discussions on the aims and objectives to be pursued. The idea of setting up the Forum was evolved jointly by nationals of the countries of the South, resident in the Federal Republic of Germany, and Germans.

The discussions also dealt with questions which still continue to be asked: Is there really a scope for yet another association in the field of development policy? How can a new organisation whose members and office-holders are pre-occupied with their respective professions and jobs achieve the ambitious objective North-South Forum has set itself? Will "idealism" survive the hard reality?

Evidently, not all these and similar questions could be answered with a sense of finality, and it is still too early to come up with patent replies to all the queries. Nevertheless, the founding members of North-South Forum were unanimously of the view that though there is no lack of organisations devoted to Third World affairs, there is plenty of room to focus on North-South relations in their entire spectrum in order to help bring about a genuine North-South and South-North dialogue with the active participation of the South as well as the North, especially the Federal Republic of Germany.

The founding members of the Forum joined together for a common cause, fully aware that while arguments do play a role and words can be weapons, a higher degree of intercommunication does not necessarily lead to a better understanding. Yet they were – and continue to be – convinced of the need for a genuine dialogue, as opposed to the 'a dialogue of the deaf' and 'a dialogue among unequals'. For genuine dialogue alone can ensure a durable understanding.

Undoubtedly there ist nothing original in such an argument. The Chairman of the Independent Commission for Internaitonal Development Issues (ICIDI), Willy Brandt, has said as much in his introduction to the Report entitled "North-South: A Programme for Survival", released early 1980.

In fact the North-South Forum was founded nearly three years after the ICIDI issued its First Report. Even though the Commission was headed by a former Chancellor and Chairman of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), then still in power, the Report had failed – despite Brandt's earnest efforts – to have the desired impact on policies as they were actually practised.

It was with a view to breaking the deadlock in North-South relations that ICIDI, popularly known as the Brandt Commission, issued a Second Report entitled "Common Crisis". It provided "a message of ultimate hope – that the world can cooperate and expand to become safer and more prosperous". The Report, "Brandt Two", was released at the end of 1982.

Meanwhile power had changed hands in Bonn. However the inception of North-South Forum had nothing to do with the change of government in Bonn. The timing was purely incidental. The North-South Forum was not – and is not – designed as an extended arm of any political party, ruling or opposition, in the Federal Republic of Germany or abroad. And, in order to achieve its objective the North-South Forum stands – and will continue to stand – above narrow party political interests.

Since its inception, the North-South Forum has arranged panel discussions, seminars, lectures and exhibitions – a proud figure of 24 by the end of 1984. Our partners in carrying out projects of a diversified range included, apart from FES: the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the German Foundation for International Development (DSE), German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHT), Chamber of Trade and Industry (IHK) Frankfurt, Carl Duisberg Gesellschaft (CDG), Medicus Mundi, Städtesolidarität Bremen-Pune, Deutsche Welle (Voice of Germany), the periodical 'Publik Forum', Society for the Promotion of Literature from Africa, Asia and Latin America in Frankfurt, the City of Remagen and the missions of the federal states of Baden-Württemberg and Hesse.

The activities the Forum has planned for the coming months and years envisage collaboration with towns and parishes, scientific, cultural and educational establishments, governmental and non-governmental organisations dealing with development policy, employers' and employees' federations, and of course with business and industry.

North-South dialogue must include in its fold a wide spectrum of partners involved. With this in view, guest speakers at the meetings organised by North-South Forum were many. They included above all Willy Brandt, the Prime Minister of Tanzania, Salim Ahmed Salim, Adviser to the Finance Minister of Mexico, Dr. Jaime Serra-Puche, the Lord Mayor of Bremen, Hans Koschnick, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation Dr. Jürgen Warnke, Chairman of the Social Democratic Parliamentary Party, Dr. Hans-Jochen Vogel and Cardinal Arns, Archbishop of Sau Paulo, Brazil.

With the support of the South, North-South Forum hopes to prevail upon political leaders, decision-makers, journalists, entrepreneurs and trade unionists to unite in action in the common cause of achieving international understanding.

International understanding and not the furtherance of ideological cleavages, a genuine dialogue and not factionalism – of the Left or Right variety: this is the sole aim of this relatively new entrant on the scene of North-South relations, the North-South Forum.

Reinhard Keune, Head of the FES Media and Communication Department

The topic we have chosen for today is a difficult one in various aspects. Communication and media development in the Third World and the demand for a more balanced share of the South in the international information flow have been much debated over the last few years at national, regional and international levels. The UNESCO General Assemblies since 1978, at least, seem to mark not only a ceasefire in a heated and controversial debate between different ideological camps. There was also a sign of rapprochement between North and South who both indicated their intention to cooperate in the information field while little or no progress was made on other vitally important issues of the North-South dialogue. Today, however, we have to ask ourselves and those responsible on either side whether this fragile consensus is already endangered again. Growing tensions between the Super Powers also influence the North-South relationship and ideological positions tend to harden again in the developing and in the developed world.

Furthermore, the worldwide economic and financial crisis has taken a deep effect in many Third World countries, preventing their communication infrastructures from coping with the needs of national development. In industrialized countries, unemployment and a significant slowdown of economic growth make it more difficult to share expertise, hardware and funds with media institutions of the South. If this is a fact, if communication rates are low in the South due to economic constraints and cooperation rates low in the North due to similar reasons, what are the prospects left for developing countries?

Our topic becomes even more complicated when we take into account that the Third World is also confronted with the rapid progress of new information technologies such as satellite communication, data transmissions, computers or even video. These technologies require huge investments which, again, are mostly not available. So what are the alternatives? Or are there ways and means to introduce new technologies to developing countries without increasing the economic crisis even more?

These and many more questions were subject to the discussion of our small conference over the last few days – and we are fortunate enough to have the participants of this conference with us tonight – and the answers that we found were few and scattered. But we felt that it is worthwhile to share both the questions and the few answers with you tonight and to invite your interventions. While there is a danger of being swept away with the enthusiasm over the brave new world of advanced technologies or – which might be considered to be the other

extreme – to be ineffected by total pessimism and frustration, we tried to observe during our discussions one overriding criteria which is the socio-economic context of communication development.

Eventually always, people, the society as a whole or groups of it, are affected and their benefit should be the ultimate measure.

The Discussion

Somsakdi Xuto, Former Minister to the Prime Minister's Office, responsible for information and the Thai Government Spokesman; presently, Professor at the National Institute of Development Administration, Bangkok, Thailand.

Being a non-information specialist, I am afraid what I have to say is likely to be long on problems but short on solutions. This is because I do not, at this moment, have sufficient wisdom to know their solutions. I shall also attempt, as much as possible, to present what I believe to be some of the views from so-called Third World.

In the first place, it does not seem to me to mean very much talking about the Third World as a whole. I think Third World countries exhibit more differences than their common characteristics and therefore, we should try to differentiate various countries of the Third World.

I am a little bit more familiar with developing countries of East Asia or the Asian Pacific Region and shall accordingly try to reflect views from this region of the world.

Mr. Hans Dieter Klee made an excellent presentation, during the two-day conference organised by FES in which I had been privileged to attend, of what he called a 'communication technology avalanche'. He emphasised the fact that this 'avalanche' is here much quicker than most of us have realized. It is now an unchallengeable fact and is accelerating. I could not have agreed with him more. The problem is essentially how to cope with this accelerating 'avalanche'.

There are, of course, obvious socio-economic consequences, in which some alarming pictures have already been painted. However, it seems that, in the developing countries of the Asian Pacific Region, economic opportunity arising from this communication technology 'avalanche' is much more emphasized than other possible adverse consequences. Before I came here, there was an article appearing in the Bangkok Post endorsing communication technology as the 'economic wave of the future'. Apparently, countries in the region have been more inclined to view the communication technology in terms of actual and potential economic benefits they could make out of it. This economic-oriented notion may have something to do with the fact that East Asia is now generally regarded as the most economically dynamic region of the world.

Admittedly, there is hardly any doubt that for developing countries as a whole, socio-economic consequences of the communication technology 'avalanche' are real and need to be confronted. In this connection, I believe that developing

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countries need to begin by establishing some order at home. In other words, they must know what they want and take steps to achieve them. Instead of being usually reactive to what is happening, developing countries need information goals, policies, priorities, plans and programs to serve their respective national interests. These needs are, of course, easier said than done because, among many difficulties faced by most developing countries, one of the most important is the problem of 'political legitimacy', resulting in political instability and lack of continuity. Therefore, with regard to national information goals and policies, I believe, and I have coined a phrase for this, that there are also problems of 'information policy legitimacy' experienced by most developing countries. However, these national needs must be clearly stated and consistently pursued, thus establishing some order at home if the communication technology 'avalanche' could, hopefully, be beneficially channelised.

Our friend from Indonesia presented to us a successful case of the application of advanced technology i.e. the PALAPA satellite system, which was introduced in the early 70s. It has been successful simply because the Indonesians have been very clear about what they want and have pursued their goals with consistency. I think that Third World countries could learn a lot from the Indonesian experiences. Furthermore, if developing countries could be as successful as Indonesia has been, it could help to strengthen the North-South dialogue because one of the criticisms against the South – that the South does not seem to know what it wants – would have been eliminated.

So an order at home is crucial for a developing country; it is a necessary prerequisite to confront the accelerating 'avalanche' as well as to have a more meaningful dialogue with the North.

Moreover, the prevailing focus of information seems to have been unduly in favour of information technology and economic aspects. In other words, information 'means' have been heavily emphasised as against information 'contents'. I think there is a need, particularly in terms of possible cooperation between the North and the South, to try to change the tone of information agenda in favour of contents if a proper balance is to be achieved and maintained.

The fascination with technology and the attractiveness of economic benefits are natural, real and important. Without correspondingly well-developed 'contents', however, such benefits are meaningless, with dangerous implications, to the development of human beings, which is crucially indispensable, to both the countries of the North and South.

Keune:

Thank you. I found it quite remarkable that most of your appeals were addressed to yourself and to your fellow scholars and communicators in the South, and this creates, I think, a new element in the overall debate and it helps to take the tension out of it because it sounds and is more realistic. But since you have mentioned Mr. Klee's paper that was introduced during our short conference may I call upon him because I think he has something to say in this context of the lack of policy and the need for policy.

Hans Dieter Klee, Director, Africa Division of Deutsche Welle

In view of the worldwide network integration which, for better or worse, the developing countries are part of, the electronics industry is successfully moving into the markets of the Third World. While the process of socio-economic change will without doubt proceed at a slower pace there than in the industrialized countries, satellite and information technology have already established themselves surprisingly quickly.

Socio-cultural doubts and objections do not hold up the avalanche of technical development any more than do delinking models. It is, however, essential to channel this flood in line with overall developments.

Thus in the developing countries innovative or look-ahead concepts must be developed without delay which go beyond the classical media of the transmission of information such as press, radio, television and film, and include the entire field of communications policy.

The dividing lines between individual governmental departments such as the ministries of planning and information, of posts and telecommunications or of education become fluid. Their overlapping responsibilities require dovetailing into a concept of national communications policy within the framework of the development plan.

Because of the world economic situation and national economic planning which has often missed its target, there is a growing realisation in the developing countries that they must grow more food for home consumption.

However, economic recovery or economic and social progress presupposes motivation and involvement of the rural population.

This requires not only economic and financial incentives but also easier access to information and advice as well as more effective dialogue with the farmers.

The role of information and communications in the development process must be rethought and new communications models developed as the result of the latest studies on failures in development projects. These are due to unrealistic expectations of lasting and effective participation of the rural masses. It has been known for a long time that rural development can hardly be directed efficiently by technocrats, from the big cities or from abroad, who are unfamiliar with the area or its traditions. However, the recognition is much more recent that self-help schemes cannot be forced on backward farmers so that they pull themselves up by their own bootstraps nor on those who have been frustrated by misguided policies and who are no longer production or market-oriented.

Hence, new concepts are required for the commitment of professionally trained "animateurs ruraux" or "extension workers" who are familar with the region and its people and enjoy their respect. In other words, rural experts with the power to motivate, with a grasp of the situation, the ability to integrate, and who are backed up by a modern tailor-made development strategy.

This will, however, make new and more effective forms of communication necessary as well as adapted or improved equipment for their transmission, a new kind of radio for the rural population, the use of video, 'development support communication', effective telephone links, the collection and evaluation of data.

Let me just sum up four points. Firstly: interdependence and convergence request common concepts of communication development, that means, combined and harmonized efforts of developed and developing countries. The recognition that telecommuncations have a significant multiplying effect in economic and social development needs to be given greater importance.

Secondly: decentralization of communication infrastructure in developing countries is necessary in order to bring development strategies closer to the rural masses and to get their feedback on frustration or encouragement.

Now the third point: financial engineering is necessary, that means, a combination of leasing and financing, countertrading, tight credits. We must combine the interests of development strategy with the fierce struggle for bigger markets by the industries of the developed countries.

This means a research on the costs of the losses and the wastage in development which could have been prevented, had there been adaquate telecommunication. With more telecommunication, not only telephone but all the means of new technologies, there might be a better management, there might be a much better marketing, there will be much better information throughout a vast country and even to the rural masses.

And, the last point: Stronger training assistance to train experts today for tomorrow's needs, greater emphasis on integrated projects for development support communication is requested. The financial resources in our countries, as Mr. Keune said, nowadays are much more difficult to mobilize for developing countries. Nevertheless, if we look into new concepts we will find that we can continue in financially assisting the developing countries if there is a firm will to do so and if we explore our common interest. I would join you in being a little bit optimistic that new ways and new concepts will be found if we immediately multiply our efforts.

I completely agree as far as socio-cultural fears are concerned and I never hesitate to meet these fears which Herbert Schiller, Cees Hamelink and others published in several articles and books. On the other hand I do think that there is a certain way out of the dilemma. There has been talk of consultation and cooperation. Let me ask for four practical follow-ups in this cooperation and consultation between South and North:

1. We need more detailed field-studies to explore to what extent today's communications technology and that of the next generation might change or destroy the social or cultural cohesion or heritage of those using it. Many books have been written but there haven't been up to now sufficient combined efforts bringing people, experts, scientists, practitioners from the Third World countries and those of the North together for practical research on application at the grass-root-level.

   Institutions in both the industrialized and the developing world need to cooperate more closely in all aspects of communications technology, from research to training and continued re-training of operators. A task that needs to be tackled with the utmost speed.

2. Why shouldn't we, set up a Who-is-Who in communications including existing institutions in the North and the South? Whenever one tries to analyse the dilemma, it is so difficult to assemble the reliable material.

   Time is running so speedily that we need such documentation desperately. We are happy to meet people like you with an indepth knowledge, a better knowledge than we have in the North about your specific problems and the possibilities and the dangers of technology transfer.

3. Many publications of the South are up to now unknown to us. We only get to know by chance if we meet some of our colleagues from Third World countries – and we have met brilliant brains in Africa, in Latin America, in Asia who could contribute better than sometime we do ourselves in those discussions. They know the publications of their own and neighbouring countries. Help us in setting up catalogues on research and publications.

Keune:

I am again taken by surprise because I expected, when you commenced your statement by way of supporting Mr. Somsakdi Xuto that contents are neglected, that you would continue with a plea for the contents, but towards the end of your statement you quoted Richard Butler of ITU and you pleaded for a better technological infrastructure. So this makes my task not easier. Anyway, I would like now to call upon one of those who are usually, by those on the programme, on the software side, accused of being technocrats. Probably we will now get a statement from the technological side in favour of contents. May I ask you, Mr. Elias, to take the floor.

Dietrich Elias, former Permanent Secretary of the Federal German PTT Ministry:

Well, I think, telecommunication is becoming a more and more important element of infrastructure in the developing countries. There is no chance for a real good growth of industry and economies when you have not a good telecommunication infrastructure. It is not only important for industry and business but also for interhuman relations. I will give you an example:

For instance, in our country 15 years ago we had – looking at the telephone network – about 25 per cent private subscribers and 75 per cent business subscribers. Nowadays, with a growth in some past years to about 1.7 million new subscribers, we have about 90 per cent private subscribers and only ten per cent business subscribers. You see, the telephone and telecommunication have become more and more an instrument of individual communication between human beings. It is a remedy against isolation and the price of the telephone, for instance, the price for a unit, has acquired a significance which in former times the price of bread had.

When we plan to raise the tariffs for letters there is a discussion with business, industry and mail order houses because the normal German household sends only a few letters a year. It does not matter so much for private persons whether a stamp of 60 pennies or 70 pennies has to be put on a letter. But if you intend to raise the telephone tariff per unit which here in our country is 23 pennies to let us say 25 you will have a political discussion here and the minister who is going to do this must be very cautious.

Let me give your another example. Three years ago when we introduced time metering in the local networks it took us about two years to do so. Because so

many people rely on the telephone for talking hours and hours to get out of isolation and especially in the big cities you can notice that there are a lot of people who do not keep contact with their relatives. Their children and their family are spread around the country and sometimes the telephone is the only possibility to get together. That is one point. Telecommunication is not only an instrument for business and for industry but has increasingly emerged as a very important instrument for interhuman relations.

Now the question, when the countries and governments are realizing the importance of telecommunication, is as to why they are not building new networks or enlarge the existing ones. The usual reason advanced is that there is no money. I am always astonished to hear an argument like this because when you are looking around the world, normally in the telecommunication business, the administration earns a lot of money. In telecommunication the money lies on the ground. You only have to pick it up. One of the main prerequisites is a reasonable tariff system.

Another point I wish to make is that telecommunication has become more and more sophisticated. Telecommunication is not only telephone and telex as it has been, perhaps, up to five or six years ago. But we are now going into new technologies, for instance, in data transmission or in satellite service or especially, what is coming up now and most probably will become very important, is the ISD. That means, the Integrated Services Digital network.

In this network we have the possibility to combine all the existing different networks that we have today for instance for telephone, for telex, for data transmission and things like this in one network. And this network will be in a short time broadband network where you can transmit all the information from one point on your desk to the people you want to call and you have to use anymore different flexible and relatively cheaper.

The last point I wish to make is that information is something like a national resource of importance like crude oil, iron or coal. I think, those countries who can handle this information by transporting it in advanced networks and handle it in advanced computer technologies have the best chance for an economic and social development being in line with the wishes I heard from my colleagues here on the panel in the last few minutes.

Keune:

I would like to carry on this experiment of joining people from various professions both on the hardware and on the software side with calling upon Dr. Pohlert, because he somehow is in the midstream. He is the highest ranking representative of the Deutsche Presse Agentur which is supposed to be a software agency but he himself is an engineer by profession. So I look forward to your contribution, Dr. Pohlert.

Dr. Thilo Pohlert, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Deutsche Presse-Agentur (dpa):

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for your kind introduction. But to be fair I have to tell you my handicaps. I am a member of the press and that means something, because you may have some problems with the press and if you didn't, then one of your friends will have had.

And if you still say you never have problems with the press I like to hear that, but I think sooner or later, you will have it. And this gives me the chance to tell you what we have to do and how difficult it is sometimes to work under a pressure of time which you probably, not many of you, can imagine.

As a news agency we have beyond 135 news gathering offices in the world, spread all over the world and therefore we have to maintain a huge and very expensive network. So we know everything about the communication business; we have hopes, but no dreams and we fight for progress, but we have no illusions, because we are professionals. But there is one thing: there is no doubt that communication has highest priority in developing societies. It is a basis of human life and has the same importance as health, economy, food, administration and entertainment, of course. It is evident that either individual or mass communication may have different values in different countries. But there are many doubts as to what is going to be done and how disproportions between highly industrialized and developing countries can be balanced, gaps closed.

The free flow of information is a basic right of human beings. I personally feel, and that is my very personal opinion, that we have to fight against the arrogance that economic power could enable anyone to know or to decide what kind of information is important or essential. And so I believe more and more what John F. Kennedy said: The world must be safe for diversity.

The best is I show you how the present situation is. As we have heard from experts and learnt from experts, technology has developed nearly unlimited possibilities for communications. We started with 50 bits transmission per second, the old good and solid teleprinter, and now we are by 250000 bits per second and it is going on and on. And sooner or later the satellites will give us a rain of bits down here in an unlimited quantity and it becomes more and more difficult to find out what kind of information we need.

Information is swelling on more and more tremendously and how close are we already to a crisis of information? When is the hour of information overkill?

And there is another very important point: The information behaviour of the society is definitely changing. I shall try to show you a few pictures to illustrate what I really mean.

We have the possibility now to store away the information, that means, not only to bring intelligence and information from one point to the other point in the world over long distances, we have now the possibility to transmit information over the time, that means, to store it away and to recall it when we need them.

Let's go 1000 years before our time counting: before Christ, you had the clay tablets and it is evident that you couldn't bring many an information on a clay tablet and communication was more or less impossible, then, that is, if you wanted to send your information to someone else far away, it was a very hard work to carry the clay tablets. But now we are going to magnetic memories, optical memories and on one disc we can store away round about one million information bits and can get them in no time immediately whenever we need them.

On the other side we have the information volume, this increases exponentially, and I will give you only a few figures. You know the human knowledge doubled until 1900 once, that means 5000 years of human history was written down and all the knowledge only doubled once in such a long time. Now we have a doubling of knowledge every three or four years; in some specific sciences like nuclear technique and electronics, the time for doubling is even shorter.

And therefore, we have a crowd of information which is incredible. 180 news agencies in the world are gathering and spreading informations. Thirteen and a half million words daily, thirteen and one half million words daily! 8000 leading newspapers, with 440 million subscribers are spreading information. Every 45 seconds one relevant expert story is going to be published.

Beside, one million reports of conferences and industrial records are printed and communicated every year. That means one hundred million pages or, if you are an expert, two hundred thousand megabites. An excellent hardware system could even store them away

What can be done? The change of information I mentioned gives a few answers. In olden times people said I want to know everything and now they say I only want to know what I need to know. That is a very simple demand, but here is a very difficult solution behind it. Readers and televiewers expect better information and background. Users of information require selection by choice and informaiton on demand. Because you never know if they give you information now if this information can be of any importance to you. Today it may look to you it is of no importance at all and tomorrow it may be much more important for you.

And therefore dialogue and information retrieval systems with interactive information call systems are required. And this is the solution and I just can give you in a very short statement here a short selection what species of information on demand are available. That is not science fiction, that is all available. You can have selected news on prefixed demand, that means your own news or information profile can be answered by systems. You can have formated information calls. You just use catchwords and you bring the catchword into the system and the system will give you any information. You can have press photo information banks, news data banks, information banks as an electronic archive and, of course, in the interactive communication between screens you can have videotext, news by television sets and so on.

But this all requires a highly developed technology and therefore I, sometimes, am surprised that in developing countries they spend a tremendous amount on television, they spend a tremendous amount of money probably for other sources like radio, broadcasting, newspapers, but more or less they forget the news agencies, because the news agencies could help a lot especially in developing countries, to help to sort out information and to qualify information.

What I mean is this: there are different kinds of information. Spot news, of course, you got to know, you ought to know, you have to know what happens all over the world. And then you have policy, domestic, foreign policy, economy, commodities, exchange rates, sports, arts, sciences, features. And you have the different regions, you have your own home country, Europe, United States, Asia, Australia or whatever it is. That all can be pre-selected, that means, in other words, you don't have to cope with a tremendous amount of information. To give you just a few figures: my company is gathering daily round about one million words of news, not information, news and we have limited sources to transmit them; we are only in the position to transmit to our newspapers and other clients, companies, news agencies round about between 120 and 150 thousand words. That means, journalists have to make decisions every minute. Out of 100 per cent information volume they throw away 85 per cent or even more.

Therefore, the news agencies are using message-switching systems. Message switching systems give the possibility to give any information when they are

gathered by a code what it means and then electronic systems can select and sort out and preselect the information.

To say one word only about the many times quoted retrieval systems. Retrieval system means not that you have to have very high qualified people or engineers to find out where are the information and how do I get them. It is only a question of a good software that you can put your question in natural language and you will get your answer immediately. And it will surprise you that these systems are available and are already going to be built up in the Third World as well, because the selection enables you to qualify your information you need. Now to get into the discussion I would like to put a few questions: what do you think about it, what would be the best ways to develop information systems?

I never say information industry, because that is never a matter of trade or dealing and money. It is a matter of essentials, of very, very important essentials. What is the best infrastructure or technology or what is the best way to build up infrastructure of information sources? Training of experts, most modern technology or moderate techniques, step by step? What do you think about it?

Or would you say it is more useful to improve the quality of information, first of all, or building up huge and tremendous communication facilities? I should like to join in a dialogue with you.

Keuhe:

Thank you very much Dr. Pohlert. One might have gotten the impression for the while that you indicate the future dangers of information overflow to developing countries. I recall the word of information pollution which is applicable already to quite a number of developing countries too, in addition to our own problem with it. The hint you gave about getting organized in a siutation of information pollution by the means and methods you use in your agency is, as far as I can see, a very valuable one. While there might be already an enormous information overflow in our Western societies, we should reconsider the problems of information and information distribution and information exchange in a region which is certainly governed to a large extent by information thirst. And I am refering in this connection to Africa, I hope that Mr. Demena, the Director of the URTNA Programme Exchange Center will dwell upon this point in his short intervention, too.

Kassaye Demena, URTNA, Kenya:

Before I make my own modest contribution to this panel I would like to express my thanks for giving the privilege of being here through courtesy of FES and also the North-South Forum to be amongst experts from whom I feel I gained a lot and therefore my institution URTNA has gained a lot. I think, earlier on, the Chairman has kindly informed you, what URTNA is all about it. It is a regional association of African broadcasting organisations which is concerned in almost all aspects of broadcasting activities and services. Now having come after brilliant contributions made up to now, I feel constrained to think as to what to add, which would be of substance to you, which would be worthwhile your time.

Now the topic we have been given, throughout the panel is economic boundaries of communications in the Third World. Already Mr. Xuto and Mr. Klee have mentioned them. And may I in a schematic form without having to go into detail, because the details have already been given, point out that in Africa economic boundaries are the most obvious ones; the financial limitations, of course the manpower limitations, the under-development in terms of the manpower capacity.

The technical limitations: almost anything that has to do with communication, comes from the industrialized countries and worse of all, there is often the confusion of priorities or, perhaps, I would like to put it this way, a sort of mismanagement of resources, which I believe to be the most serious problem affecting all communication activities in Africa.

Towards the end of his introduction, Mr. Keune posed a question: Now, under these circumstances, what are the alternatives? We, a few of us, have been able to benefit from the wisdom and advice given to us by Mr. Xuto. There is one point which has stuck my mind and that is the production-sharing on a regional basis. By that I mean the pooling of resources of a number of countries with compatible needs and aspirations, in order to keep pace with this electronic revolution.

The second perhaps is, what has already been mentioned by Mr. Klee, the reassessment of the traditional trends in technical development. Can we, we are now asking ourselves in Africa, a few of us, in our own organization and in other African institutions, do we dare follow the traditional trends in technological development? Where would that lead us? Would that lead us, at all anywhere? Possibly to a dead end. We have not found answers to those questions yet and there are similar other questions.

Perhaps lastly the role communicators will have to take to intensify their means of persuasion in the formulation of communication policies in a more integrated manner. A lot has been discussed in more or less academic circles and then among communicators, among a few officials, but a lot remains to be done by

communicators themselves, in order to have relevant communication policies which would make it possible for the Third World countries, particularly those in Africa, to benefit from this technological or electronic revolution.

May I read to you from a small paper which might be relevant for this discussion. As you know, in Africa most broadcasting organizations are owned, almost all, with the exception of one or two radio stations, by the government and I particularly take up broadcasting, because I happen to represent an institution concerned with broadcasting, which is one aspect of communication. It is important to note that, despite the need by African governments today to take over the broadcasting media and sometimes the press, the majority or almost all of them do not realize the need for a national communication policy.

The overwhelming imbalance between the North and the South in the field of communication problems within and between African countries requires that African governments develop fruitful national communication policies. It is believed that national communication policies and strategies should emanate not only from government sources but to start with from grass root level and encompass all development ministries and governmental agencies. There is a feeling that in some cases the politics had not been clearly spelt out, that the ideas paving the way towards the policies are not clearly spelt out to enable all those concerned to use them as guidelines for development.

Probably the consultation between governments and communicators is indeed essential in order to guarantee harmonized development of the national electronic media and their effective roles in social dynamics.

Having just given you not anything new but something that might reflect the situation in Africa I would just like to make a few remarks about the position of the continent not perhaps as an economist which I am not, but as a practitioner in the broadcasting services and activities. Having said that, the region has the least number of broadcasting stations of all regions, the least number of radio sets, the least number of radio listeners, radio and television listeners and the least number of trained manpower.

Therefore, the problems there are indeed great. In spite of this, the electronic revolution has indeed made some headway into Africa and the feeling is that this is going to intensify within the next few years. What therefore is the position in URTNA? The postion in URTNA is that a lot has to be done. From our part URTNA cannot tackle this question.

There are a number of Pan-African institutions with which we hope to join hands, namely the Pan-African Telecommunication Union, the African Communication Education Council and a number of others.

Now what is the alternative to all these great problems faced particularly by Africa and perhaps to some extent the Asian countries?

There is a need for a reassessment of resources, there is a need for intensive manpower development and of course there is a need to maintain this dialogue between the North and the South, because without that dialogue, I am afraid, the alternative is confrontation which is to nobody's benefit.

We in URTNA would like to see this dialogue intensified; we feel that there is a lot which has to be done by the communicators in Africa which we hope to encourage to do research into the possible application of the new technology for communication activities in such a vast continent which accommodates Europe, Western Europe particularly, ten times over.

We also feel that having succeeded in persuading our own communicators to create a strong base, our respective governments will further explore cooperation and collaboration with the industrialized countries of the North, urging them to assist us in the smooth introduction of the electronic age into Africa where parts of the continent are, I'm afraid, still in the stone age.

Keune:

Thank you Mr. Demena, I think the last two short interventions show the dimension of the gap, of the discrepancy between what technology holds in front of us as potential and the realities in a part of the developing world, in this case of Africa. Among the institutions that try to cope with this situation and try to offer some assistance to redress it the PTTs play an enormous role and, at this point, I would like to invite Mr. Stengel of the German Postal and Telecommunication Ministry to tell us about approaches of his ministry to assist in redressing at least that part of our problem that deals with telecommunication systems.

Ekkehart Stengel, German Federal PTT Ministery:

Mr. Elias, former Secretary of State in my ministry, has rightly stressed the importance of telecommunication and modern technologies. And I wish to add only a few remarks. Communication is the base of every human community, small or big. The German Federal Post as one of the organizations of the PTT

organizations all over the world, is very interested in having good relations with other PTT organizations in order to enable a good telecommunication all over the world.

And therefore within the framework of technical and financial cooperation of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Deutsche Bundespost gives technical assistance by sending manpower to the developing countries. We have been doing this since 30 years. Presently, we have about 120 to 130 experts in developing countries, who train their counterparts in PTTs in new technologies which are needed in postal services and telecommunication services. I hope, we will succeed together with our counterparts to establish better telecommunications services in these countries and between our countries in the North and the developing countries in the South.

Keune:

It was not without purpose and, I must confess, with a rather selfish purpose that I left Dr. Contreras at the end of the queue because I know that he is able and willing to help me in the very difficult task of summing up this range of topics, being a scholar and an academician on the one hand and a practitioner on the otner. Dr. Contreras, please.

Dr. Eduardo Contreras, Regional Mass Communication Research and Documentation Centre CIESPAL, Quito, Ecuador:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for those absolutely undeserved expressions. I had not expected in the least to be the last person to talk in the pane. I hope that these words are not the final ones but rather just some initial remarks for an ensuing debate, an invitation to a dialogue. May I add that it is a privilege to be here at this round-table of the Nord-Süd-Forum.

While many serious and unresolved problems still persist in the development of communications in less developed countries, we already confront a new evolving scenario, that being originated by the new communication technologies. Thus, communication development expands further as a topic and as an arena for action because it is covering so much more aspects. But at the same time the apparent paradox is that such expansion corresponds itself with a restriction on the concept of communication through its technological mystification.

Thus, big pending issues are not added up to the new agenda, but rather magically appear as replaced by it, forgotten, relegated vis-a-vis the new technological utopias that are being offered to us. In the Third World we have received, and in many cases accepted fashionable utopias and mythologies. One of them was communication for development within the confines of modernization theory. It was thought that communication had an enormous mobilizing potential for economic and social development, for the whole country or for specific sectors such as the rural one, forgetting somehow that structural and economic constraints (an aspect which the model did not consider) asked of communication, in and by of itself, to play an absolutely impossible role. It is not that development communication is out: it is much more needed than ever in our countries. What I am criticizing is the ingenuity of the old assumptions. We have believed in development communication as we have also believed and still believe in, for instance, non-formal education as short-cuts, given perhaps our own inability and powerlessness in altering inequitable national and international economic conditions.

It is by no means casual that Third World frustrations in implementing even modest achievements in the New International Economic Order have been transferred to a field of greater hope, the New International Information and Communication Order or NIICO.

Initially thought of just as a complaint against imbalanced flows of information, NIICO soon came to encompass everything communicational. But when time came to pass from pronouncements and rhetoric to meaningful actions – which required of necessity consultation and cooperation between the North and the South and within the South – we witness once again the same old persistent problems and these keep on haunting us, despite some interesting and worthwhile advances.

Among many problems affecting development communication – which is only one aspect of the whole field of communication but a very important one for us in the Third World – I might start saying that in my region, Latin America, the basic broadcasting model is copied from the United States. It is a private commercial model. I do not need to expand on the implications of such a model. Rather, let me list some gaps, divorces or contradictions relevant to development communication. For one, there is a divorce between private media owners and operators and the academic community, which in general is critical of that institutional arrangement but at the same time is isolated in its ivory tower and is conspicuously absent from most development communication efforts, which it perhaps regards as too menial.

There is also a divorce between media and media for education and development. We have some 3000 to 4000 commercial private radio stations in Latin America (statistics are not fully accurate). Only 100 or 150 of them are truly educational or cultural. We have also communication gaps and widely

differing agendas between journalists (especially self-made journalists) and communication researchers and theoreticians. We have contradictions and divorces between present and emerging professional demands and the academic training we get at universities, which places a high value on a narrow theoreticism. May I add that the subject-matter of communication studies and training is still under dispute and that we are also conducting a frantic search for the elusive clarification of the professional communication's profile.

We have divorces between communication professionsals trained for commercial mass communication and the increasing needs of local and participatory communication, of development communication, for which those skills and attitudes are ill-suited; between pressing needs of such real-life communications and the research lags in confronting those needs, as well as a lack of good planning and implementation of adequate communication interventions to alleviate those needs. And if I may finish with this list at a more general level, we have contradictions too between urgent and basic communicative needs of popular groups and the whole media establishment, and divorces also between the international progressive view of many Third World countries and what happens at home, which in many cases reveal undemocratic and non-participatory communication policies, regulations and practices.

These are only but a few examples affecting just one small field within the communication arena. Each one of them is very complex and each one – though they are not isolated – opens up a whole area of research, heated debates, policy options, and many alternative actions. We have been actively discussing them – and doing things about them – throughout Latin America.

The point is that there is no magical solution to them through the new communication technologies. I do not fear these. But what does concern me is the shift in agendas brought about by the advent of such new concerns.

Let us come back to the international debate and Third World struggles. We have gone from the New International Economic Order to the New International Information and Communication Order debates, hoping and waiting. From there we went on to the IPDC-International Programme for the Development of Communication. From the UNESCO forum we had to go to the International Telecommunications Union forum and to this whole new communication technologies arena.

But in this new scenario, the New International Economic Order and the New International Information and Communication Order are further linked. Reinhard Keune once noted that NIICO was a perplexing arena, a place for a strange battle where all contenders, against all rules of strategy, seemed to be condemned to win. I will no further elaborate on that. But is this so regarding the

new technologies debates and decisions? For instance, in many Latin American countries there are severe economic constraints for advanced communication systems development, regardless of how undemocratic they might be, because of the need to service a huge external debt.

Now, the new field of communication technologies is capital-intensive while we tend to be labour-intensive. It is also tremendously dependent on accumulation and generation of very precise and specialised knowledge, of intense facilities for research and development, and so on. Accessing and processing pertinent and timely information is a privileged resource not equitatively shared or used. The field is also extremely competitive, and products and processes are fastly obsolescent. Once you buy the new computer, satellite or whatever, you know it will probably be outdated within a very short time period. Furthermore, this new communication technology arena needs homogeneity, standardization, economies of scale. How are we in the Third World going to cope with this if not through regional and international cooperation? And if we are indeed deprived in core matters such as capital investment and technological infrastructures and processes, we are not extremely fortunate either in translating our agendas, issues and concerns into more favourable and equitative international rules of the game.

It is significant that the New International Information and Communication Order, when words had to become action was operationalized – or diluted perhaps – into the International Programme for the Development of Communication. This was the time to allocate resources and to render the financial and technical assistance the Third World was asking for.

True, some developed countries have been contributing in technical assistance, equipment and training. But unmet and ever growing demands far exceed a very limited supply of help and such cooperation is indeed addressing in many cases some of our old persistent problems in the development of communication. New communication technologies will bring in and are bringing in already new problems and new demands over and above what they might be offering as new means to solve such older problems.

It is also significant that the debate went away from UNESCO to ITU, the International Telecommunications Union. Such change of arena has some severe implications. It is not irrelevant that the United States gets out of UNESCO but is very active and participant in ITU. The Third World thus gets into a much more difficult arena with a very different agenda and thus, different power relationships. Nations and corporations rich in information and communication resources and infrastructures obviously do not share the concerns of high-tech communication-poor societies. For instance, these want protective regulations, reserves for future uses and so on, while transnational corporations want expanded markets today, if not yesterday. It is simply a

question of differing rationales. But while one deals in virtualities and defensiveness, another one is dealing from the advantageous position of solid entrenchment in the forefront of the new technologies' rapidly expanding development and applications.

In the prevailing rationale, the new technologies of communications are forced upon us, and a new world-wide communication scenario, whether we like it or not. All parts and components for a world digitalized data and information processing, transmission, storage and retrieval network are in place and they are already working in many critical areas. Let us understand one thing, though: it is not a question of being delinked. There is no alternative for the Third World but to get into this new scenario. Our challenge then, and I speak to communicators at this moment, both in the North and the South, is to re-enter into a debate and into decisions that have fallen into the hands of some euphoric economists and engineers that have put the issues in their own terms: efficiency, productivity, return rates and so on. We must learn those new terms, but others, too, have to learn a little from us. It is not only data and information bits, it is also content, values, ideology, that is flowing.

However, it would be self-defeating to think about the issues only in communication terms. The new technologies of communication have more to do with the redefinition and expansion of a given world economic order in which we do not have the dominant position than with mere communication or decontextualized technological issues. But at least in our contributions as communicators, let us not forget our original demands, however vaguely they may have been stated: that communication as a whole be democratized – democratized in its structures, processes, actors, contents. Such principle, I postulate, is valid both for North and South.

This requires concerted efforts both in the South and the North, but it is particularly imperative for Third World countries, however fragile and difficult our unity may be. And I do not have false illusions about concertation. It is a slow, contradictory and frustrating process. But unity and overall clarity of purpose is absolutely imperative for us in the Third World, and for that matter it is also imperative for concerned institutions and forums in the North and in international organizations.

We need concertation and cooperation, I might add, desperately. Communication development in the scenario of rapidly evolving new technologies is indeed of worldwide concern. It is not only the South or the Third World that will suffer economic, political and cultural consequences. Now, whether the new communication utopias and emerging realities will be a nightmare or yet another chance to address old and persistant problems in communication development, as well as new challenges, depends on such concertation. May I add, however, that we need much more deeds than words or rhetoric.

Keune:

Thank you very much, Dr. Contreras. I think you met fully my expectation that you would give an excellent summary of the subjects and the contributions we touched upon this evening and I think, you did something else. You have thrown open our dilemma, the dilemma of communication and the dilemma of cooperation in the communication field between North and South. Already the fact that we had to convene a panel of more than half a dozen experts shows one of the dilemmas. This is such a complex field that you can't invite one person and expect him to deal with each and every aspect.

Technology is involved, economy is involved, software program is involved and many other fields. It shows also another dilemma that while telecommunications has a lobby, has got an enormous power behind itself, the software side, the communication in the narrower sense has no lobby at all. And, this was behind the intentions of the two organizers for this gathering tonight to add a few people to a very small lobby that hopefully will grow in the future and will be supportive to the kind of work all of us here try to do, each and everybody at his more or less small angle.

Let me stop here and invite comments, questions, contributions. Perhaps someone from the panel wants to come in again. – Mr. Klee, please.

Klee:

I agree with what you said in theory, but are we in practice really interested, are we really encouraging South-South cooperation? Is it perhaps vice vers, that the firms involved in communication technology are more interested in selling equipment to those countries instead of encouraging local production? By international cooperation, by joint ventures, hardware and software production ought to be developed in your countries.

I share your point of view: For the transfer of technology adaptation to your real needs is indispensable. And desperately I always claim for contribution of experts from the Third World to teach us the know-how!

On the other hand, you are completely right in saying that transnationals who sell technology are interested in profit. There is a fight for better and larger markets. But I have made some astonishing experiences in speaking to those people. They realize that the best market prospects and the best profit in the long run are given when they start delivering adapted, tailor-made material, which does not fail.

They fully realize, that where large-scale investment plans rest on too flimsy an infrastructure and no real need for the system, it is like building sky-scrapers on quick-sand. And I think that both parties have a common interest in assuring that a concept is developed which taking into account all the relevant development factors of the countries concerned, is flexible and implemented in logical stages.

We should do more than we did up to know. We should bring together those who are sceptical, critical and those who want to sell. I got shocked discovering how many computers how much high sophisticated technology has been sold not only to Asia, which is advanced in this field and has even a proper industry and proper training institutes, but also to Africa. And this leads me to ask not how we can prevent – because we cannot – but how we can gear this avalanche.

Ramesh Jaura:

Probably a question to the participants in the panel, particularly from the Federal Republic of Germany. Is there really a willingness to share the latest technologies which are available in the North with the countries of the South and to share these technologies not only with a view to furthering economic interests, not only with a view to furthering ideological interests, but for the sake of sharing because it is after all a common future that we have to share?

Elias:

Perhaps I should try to answer this question. I personally believe that there is a real intention to do this. Because you know there is not only a question whether you want to do it, but I think you must do it. The situation in communication and in technology has changed.

Some years ago, you developed a system and it was working for the next 25 years. When you are developing a system nowadays, SPC systems, that means, Stored Programme Control systems, it will cost you about 800 to 1000 million dollars, that means on a national market you will never recover your investment, that means, you have to export it, you have to sell it on the world market.

When you want to sell it on the world market there is a need, that in those countries where you are selling it you have the possibility to develop the system further, because as you have already mentioned, Dr. Contreras, those systems no longer have a life-time of 25 years but only that of computers, that means up to ten years.

This should be done in the countries where the systems are operated, because those new systems offer a variety of services that differ from industrialized countries yourselves.

The fact is that the companies producing telecommunication equipment are very much interested to do it in their countries where they were developed, where they are doing research and development. But those countries who are going to buy the equipment are buying it only under the condition that this equipment will be produced in those countries and there should be a transfer of technology, the training for operation and maintenance.

Jutta Jaura:

As a layman, I feel that very soon all the information systems will be compatible, that it will not matter much longer what system you have taken to. Because the development is so quick on that field that it will not matter much, let us say in 20 years, to what system you have taken.

It is often pointed out that one has to go into a sort of general system if one wants to introduce this telecommunication or other things. But from my personal experience, also in my profession as a librarian, I see that information systems develop where information is needed and I feel if one would not go in for a very general development but first develop on these fields where it is needed and then later combine all things, it might be better to go in for countries who do not yet deal in general with it.

Let us take the banking system. As we all know, information and computer information is very important for international banking systems. For, banks have introduced it already internationally. So here we come to the alternative which was also mentioned by Dr. Pohlert.

I feel that first, on this special side, information must be developed for those countries who do not yet have it and with their own needs they also will develop the software they really need. And what obviously cannot be done or will not

have much success is when we also want to sell software with the hardware to them.

Keune:

Thank you. Any comment to that?

Ibrahim:

I am from the Nigerian Embassy. I am interested as an individual in this moral question. There have been examples, vivid examples of let us say, antiquated equipment tossed to us in some of the developing countries. And after a few years you discover that they are not any more useful, because they are either too old and that means that they have to be replaced and that calls for additional costs. Now one wonders if we are being helped in this case in that we are being made to buy, because what sometimes we receive isn't permanent, isn't durable. How is this to be overcome? And, secondly, some of the equipment we get to buy are too expensive for the ordinary man to buy. My question is how, what sort of assistance, what solution is there to assist the ordinary individual, the farmer, the poor man, to listen to the radio, watch the television, because of this competition in the development of communication systems.

Keune:

Any command on the first question?

Dr. Pohlert:

Of course if you buy the software from them, they want you to buy the hardware from them. That is natural. And, of course, you have always to pay your money

for the hardware because no one can give away his products for nothing. But I consider it very much different in the matter of software. Because my company, I can only speak for myself, we developed software for message switching systems and, of course, to our friends, agencies in the Third World we gave the software for nothing.

We said you have to pay for your hardware but as our friends you don't need to make the same mistakes we made and so we give you our experiences for nothing. And then of course, we are prepared to train the technicians and editors and whatever it is of our friends and now after about 10 years of this practice I can say it paid off. The money we did invest came back so far that we have lots of friends, and I can tell you – one of them he is now an information minister in a Third World country – he was trained in Hamburg in our company and we still are friends and we do not regret that we gave our experiences away for nothing. And we continue to do it.

Elias:

It is true that the companies sometimes are interested to have a non-compatibility in hardware and in software. And I think there could be one, there could be a good solution of those problems when the PTT administration would ackknowledge that they have to do something against this. And there are technical possibilities to do this.

The telecommunication administration can do a lot against this principle, sometimes it's a philosophy. For instance, the philosophy of IBM is to produce always things which are not compatible and so the administration can do something against it, by introducing intelligent systems doing what the companies don't want to do. And the systems are working already round the world.

Maunde, Head of Radio 4, Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC):

Mine, I think, it's a question. Following the discussion here, I seem to have learned a few things, of course, but with a lot of questions. First and foremost it appears that the development of communication technology is in the hands of transnational corporations. And it looks like, again, perhaps, I don't know, there

could be one member of the transnational corporation here. I don't know. But I like to believe that the majority of people who are here are much more concerned about increasing close cooperation between North and South. But the transnational corporations which have got the best researchers in communication technology are actually competing among themselves in terms of producing the latest.

Now with that kind of programme means the latest they produce they have to distribute it. Now they distribute it in the sense of selling it to the recipient developing countries. The motive of selling the latest technology could be varied but I would like to believe the primary one is to make profit, to make money, irrespective of the socio-economic consequences of that technology.

The other aspect is, when we talk about communication technology, we are obviously taking into consideration the time factor in terms of efficiency with which we distribute the information. But the question ist, perhaps, since the 60s up to the present moment, both the North and the South, have been really communicating in one way or another. Now communication and information and all the information will create information and we communicate that information and it's not an end in itself.

What is the main objective? The main objective of communication technology, of communication content is obviously to raise the standard of living of the people. We in the developing countries, talk about a peasant, so it will appear, Dr. Contreras, gave us example of academicians, media practitioners, those who are involved in commercials. In fact, he gave us a conglomerate of people who are involved in the media field. But they don't seem to come up with a monolithic approach to the question of communication.

In other ways there is some kind of pandemoneum. Now, who is the target group, who is our target group? Those in the North in their relationship with the Third World, they talk about "you must be able to produce more, to feed yourselves, you must do things for yourself."

But who should do things for himself if not a peasant, the poor peasant in the village? It is not the political beaureaucrat who constitutes the largest segment of the population but the peasant, and the technology that we are talking about should be able to, should be used to stimulate the peasant, the farmer, the worker, the ordinary worker, semi-illiterate worker to do something for himself. So I want to say in short that on the other hand we have got the transnational corporations who control the manpower resources, the financial resources to produce the latest technology and they have complete disregard about the socio-economic consequences of that technology. That is one point.

The other point: in the North we have media practitioners, we have sociologists in the North who are quite concerned about the socio-economic consequences

of that technology which is being produced in their own region. So that's were the dilemma comes. This is the dilemma that we face. No matter how much we may say we are at the mercy of the transnational corporations and in the developing countries we have to chase the hare which we will never cage. We will always live on the question of adaption. We can use the satellite system today but after three years they are introducing another new gadget. And the peasant in the village here he knows nothing about the reality of that race. This is the reason, why that it looks like the arms race.

It is like trying to say Zimbabwe would really catch up with the struggle between the Soviets and the Americans, in the arms race.

So what I am saying is that there is no way the developing countries can catch in the media technology race. But with the support of those who are in the North we have taken a progressive view and say, well, you may adapt this.

Temporarily they will be able to help us, but they themselves also have to chase those transnational corporations, because there is nothing they can do as long as they don't control the resources, the manpower resources, the scientists, the researchers whom they have direct control of and they compete of course, to make profit. They have to present their commodity on the world market. This is a superior commodity in different brands. I have no solution, I am only trying to state may own views.

Keune:

I would like to recall what we have heard this morning from Dr. Sunario from Indonesia who told us one version of how to tame the beast. He said that PALAPA A1 and PALAPA A2 were bought from the shelve. But the next generation of the Indonesian satellite, the domestic satellite, is already designed in the presence and with the know-how of Indonesian engineers. So they sit in and they don't buy it any longer from the shelve, they invest their expertise and they want it tailor-made and they change the manufacturers' approaches to their own need and their own linkings.

Dr. Sunario gave us another example of the ground stations. He said the first 50 or so were again bought from the shelve, the other ones were locally manufactured and he mentioned a figure at the order of one hundred fifty in total. So the majority already is home-made, so to speak. Now I think, this is an approach, I put it drastically, to tame the beast, but to cooperate in a way that is useful for either side.

Demena:

To a large extent I am in sympathy with what Mr. Maunde said earlier, but, in all due respect and without appearing to be the devil's advocate, we cannot expect transnational corporations to be conscious of socio-economic implications. Mr. Klee has very simply pointed out that their primary motive is to generate revenue, to make profit. Now, they have been doing so in other sectors. Everything that we have here is a product of all these transnational corporations, from the clothes we wear, from the spectacle I have in front of me, everything. Now, to expect them to be conscious of socio-economic implications is to give them undue, perhaps the kind of mandate, we don't like them to have. This is like, to me, if I may take it a little to ad absurdum, telling them to behave like governments. There they are to make profit. That's point number one.

My point number two is that at some stage the transnational corporations will be forced to be aware that they can no longer make profit unless they are adapted, unless, they find a way of developing markets in the Third World.

There is no way that you could embark upon this highly intensive technological innovation without first exploring possible markets. Now, if that reaches a saturation point then the transnational corporations will be forced to find that there has to be a market. If there is no market then there is no development. Now there is one point where I believe, there is no way the developing countries could catch up in the pace, in the electronic revolution. I again stand to be corrected. Earlier this morning, Mr. Xuto pointed out a few countries, which 20 years ago, were no better than the least developing countries. South Korea is one example, Taiwan is another and I think, somebody – right or wrong – I don't know who referred to them as the Gang of Four. Who knows where they will reach within the next five to ten years?

Keune:

Well, if there are no further contributions from the floor or from the panel I would like to thank you very cordially for your patience, for your contributions and for your involvement. Thanks a lot.